(b) if so, the details of the legislation and its main features; and

(c) how would it help Government in tackling criminals?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) (a) and (b) The Passport (Amendment) Bill, 2001 which has been introduced in the Rajya Sabha on 22/11/2001, seeks to confer powers upon the concerned authorities to suspend a passport or travel document of a person indulging in criminal or anti-national activities to prevent him/her from leaving the country during the period when the action to revoke or impound his/her passport is initiated and when the passport is actually revoked or impounded. The passport or travel document would be temporarily suspended for a period of four weeks to enable completion of the procedure for impounding or revoking the passport which *inter alia* involves the issue of a show cause notice and filing of an appeal against the order of suspension.

(c) The Bill would suitably empower the concerned law enforcement as well as preventive agencies to initiate action to prevent any criminal or anti-national element from leaving the country even if he/she has a valid passport.

Appeal to United States against selected approach in fighting terrorism

1892. SHRIMATI VANGA GEETHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have appealed to the United States against adopting a selected approach in fighting terrorism; and

(b) if so, what has been the response of the United States in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) (a) India has consistently conveyed to the international community that terrorism is a global problem that required a comprehensive international response against terrorism wherever it exist.

(b) On 05 October 2001, the White House Spokesman said at a Press Briefing that President Bush had condemned the terrorist attack

in Srinagar on 01 October and that the President had also said that "terrorism must end everywhere, and that includes in Kashmir". During Prime Minister's meeting with U.S. President George Bush on 09 November 2001 in Washington D.C., the two leaders noted that both countries are targets of terrorism and affirmed the need for a global war against terrorism and its sponsors everywhere in the world.

Loss due to payment of lease charges for excess space in a Chancery premises

1893. SHRI S. RAMACHANDRAN PILLAI: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) Whether Government have leased a Chancery premises in Houston in December, 1995 in excess of space prescribed for the purpose for a period of ten years;

(b) Whether it is a fact that by this deal Government have incurred a loss of about three crore rupees;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether any responsibility has since been fixed for such a wrong decision?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH) (a) to (d) The Chancery premises of the Consulate General of India, Houston, consisting of 11353 sq. ft. was leased with effect from December, 1995. In November 2000, Director of Audit, Indian Accounts, Embassy of India, Washington, intimated that the Post had leased an area of 4052 sq. ft. in excess of the prescribed space norms. The Audit authorities, while asking for the views of the Ministry on this issue, proposed to include the draft para in the Annual Report of CAG of India. The Post has responded that premises was rented by them on functional grounds within the rental ceiling prescribed by the Ministry while keeping inview any future expansion and local requirements. In the meanwhile, the relevant para on this issue has included in the Annual Report of the CAG of India for the year ending 31st March 2000-Nov. 2 of 2001. The Ministry is in the process of sending an appropriate response to the authorities concerned.